

Surára
Pakidáí

854 /64 cont. /If the child's nose is not

• 514 clean, the mother carefully takes it between her teeth, presses
[123] its contents into her mouth, and spits them out. The women
found it most unhygienic that I blew my nose into a handkerchief
and carried it with me.

856 The little Surára and Pakidáí learn to walk and talk at the
593 same age as the children of civilization, and they are aided by
their parents, siblings, and relatives. The pleasure of the rela-
tives is great and they are overjoyed when the child is able to
stand and walk and babble its first words, nápe=mother and
hápe=father.

862 e) Name-giving

[851] After the completion of the third year, a new, important
period of life begins. The nursing period is ended, and the child,
which hitherto belonged to the flesh and blood of the mother (325b),
has become an independent human being.

851 325b. This idea is very unusual for South
846 American Indians. It should be remem-
114 bered, however, that among most of the
171 tribes the so-called couvade, the men's
842 childbed, is practiced. Karl von den
Steinen, who has examined the psycho-
logical basis of this custom, says that in
this case the child, whether it be a boy or
girl, is "the little father," so to speak, a
part of the father, that is, a bit of his body.
(K. von den Steinen, 1894, pp. 334 ff.)
"The activity of the mother in this con-
nection is compared to that of the soil,
which receives the seed." (von Spix and
von Martius, 1831, p. 1339.)

000 has become an independent human being. Now it is also given a
553 name, which is taken from the animal or vegetable kingdom. The
776 name is given to the father, when he offers his prayers in snuff-powder
[182] intoxication, by the gigantic animal and plant spirits living on

Surara
Pakidai

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[264] There is frequent belching during and after eating, and it happens not infrequently that a member of the family breaks wind, often with a loud noise, which, however, is received with happy laughter, without any damage to the appetite. Both sexes also spit a great deal as a result of the tobacco rolls which they have in the mouth almost constantly (see p. 190).

Urination is done in the immediate vicinity of the maloka during the day and in the hearth at night. Men and boys always urinate in a squatting position, just like women and girls. For their other needs they all go a bit deeper into the forest clearing during the day, or even to the edge of the forest. When they have finished, they rub the seat back and forth a few times on the ground or against a tree trunk. The mother holds small children, in case she happens to be lying in the hammock, over the edge of it. Then she wipes her hand or lower arm across its seat a few times, or, if necessary, she uses a little stick to clean it. The little heap is covered with ashes or earth and stamped into the ground by the mother. If an adult has more important business to attend to at night, he digs a small hole beside the hammock and subsequently covers it with ashes or earth. Old or sick persons do this during the day as well. The reason that the Surara and Pakidai do not leave the maloka at night for the aforementioned purpose is because they are afraid of snakes and jaguars, as well as of nonexf, the evil spirit which transmits sickness (see p. 211). Persistent unpleasant odors are not noticeable even in closed malokas, however, since they are dispelled by the ascending smoke of the constantly burning fire.

841 During their menstruation the women do not use anything to absorb the blood (see pp. 142/143). Pools of blood that remain on the ground are obliterated by them with their feet.

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291 In general, however, the communal house is kept quite clean. One always sees men and women sweeping with a broom made of piacaba fibers. For this work both sexes liked to put on the shirts and trousers or clothing which I had brought them as gift articles and which were otherwise not at all appreciated.

262 /207 cont./

223 it answers that it is an enemy is he to kill it. In the majority of
 825 cases it turns out to be an enemy, and the hunter kills it with a
 double aim: to have meat and to cause an enemy to disappear.
 The hunter carries the eagle home, and his wife prepares it for
 ● [514] food. Those who eat the meat must not defecate on the ground,
 [785] but only in the water. The hunter himself must not eat any of
 this meat and fasts for two months. The eagle "weighs heavily"
 on his chest, and only when it has "gone upwards" does the
 hunter get better and begin to feel well again. From now on
 those who have eaten of the meat may live without taking the
 above-mentioned precautions (22).

22. See the section which deals with "war"
 /see p. 57 /.

825 It might be said that for every Sanema rancheria there
 exists a rancheria of eagles and of hanekasá. This belief has
 characteristics of the idea of the alter ego, and the Sanema
 apply kinship terms to these animals when they speak to them.
 The same occurs with regard to jaguars and other animals which
 they mentioned to us vaguely.

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 [433] Fishing plays a very secondary role in the Sanema economy.
 They fish with barbasco, with bow and arrow, but we have not
 seen special arrows for this purpose. In recent times they have
 adopted fishhooks, which they now use quite frequently.

222 /208/ Of secondary importance, coming after hunting, is
 the gathering of various kinds of small animals, insects, wild fruit,
 [527] and also honey and eggs. The shoots of palms represent an im-
 portant part of the diet, but above all the fruit of the pijiguao
 palm (Guilielma sp.), the harvest of which, during the first three
 months of the year, marks the time of festivities and other social
 activities. We were not able to gather much information from
 [114] the Sanema regarding this matter, but Barker (1953, pp. 447-48),
 Zerries (1955b), and Becher (1960) refer to this festive occasion
 in greater detail, according to their observation of it among
 the Waica, Pakidai, and Surara (cf. Vinci, 1959, pp. 111-118).

RED CLOTH AND GREEN FOREST

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idea, so I kept my eye on the lady in case developments came quicker than was expected.

The day arrived when I believed my silent surveillance would be crowned with success. Actually I had fallen into an innocent error. By way of compensation, I certainly got a good laugh out of it. I had tailed the woman along a path fairly new to me, which she had taken as if she had no wish to advertise her whereabouts. I knew the path in its early stages, but had always assumed that it ended in a thick clump of bushes, progress being further discouraged by a big fallen tree-trunk. But when I reached this obstacle I saw no sign of my quarry. I then saw that the tree-trunk could be pushed aside, to reveal a fork in the path. From this point the track was well-worn, leading a good distance away from the hut. It didn't need much mental effort for me to realize what a clumsy mistake I had made. Behind a tree an Indian was attending to Nature's needs. I had ended up in the Guaycas' privy. The old man sent up a growl of protest at this intrusion of a bearded one in the sacred retreat. The only thing left to me was to turn back, with the air of having wandered there by chance.

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It is interesting to observe that the Indians, while generally immodest to the point of indecency, regard the bodily functions as a matter for reticence and secrecy. They squat like women to urinate and for other purposes seek some remote and hidden place, as if well aware of the defencelessness of their situation at these moments. Thus they obey not only the all-important principles of hygiene, but those of security: and in a world like theirs, security is the more important.

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That same day we witnessed another interesting operation, of one of a different nature. On the morrow we were to start for Llantarilla and the Shirians had already prepared a good supply of bananas and mapei which they were bringing up in another boat. On the eve of this expedition every man jack we had engaged for it had disappeared—except Luis Antonio, who was swinging in his hammock with the public woman at his side.

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'They've gone to get their hair cut in the other hut,' he told me, when I asked where they all could be—for all the world as if he was saying: 'They're at the barber's shop round the corner.'

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We went off to the other hut, anxious to see the fun. It was Caio's turn. He was squatting on the ground in front of a pimply young woman who must have been his wife. She was giving him a perfect pudding-basin haircut, using instead of scissors the nails of her thumb and forefinger, which with the Indians

CAPTURED BY THE SAMATARI

we found traces of a big encampment: here were the forked branches with the rudimentary hammocks still slung from them. There had been fires here too, but the ashes were now cold. Bones and scraps of all sorts were scattered everywhere and in the centre of the area there was shining the great armoured back of an armadillo. This aroused everyone's curiosity, not least the Samataris'. They were probably thinking of the sumptuous banquet which this carcass had afforded, and we were very glad to see that the pangs of hunger were at that moment very real and very urgent for them, too.

The fact that the fires were cold convinced our captors that it would be a good idea to set up their own camp: there would be no likelihood tonight of catching up with the tribe that had passed this way. Things went so quietly that at times we forgot that we were prisoners: automatically we looked on the Samatari as our friends and guides, just like the Guayca Indians. But the illusion was brief: that evening we ate nothing, while our sharp-eyed hosts tucked into a mound of grubs they had collected *en route*. Then they belched their way to their hammocks, from which the odours of their farther digestion wafted down. [262]

I thought of Sempromio who had had nothing to eat either, and wondered what had happened to his painful of agouti entrails which had been left burning the night before when we were attacked. It was really the thought of all those tit-bits being burnt and wasted which stopped me going to sleep.

Next day, a little before noon, while I was watching Enrico plodding along with set jaw, sweating copiously (I might have been looking at my own image in a glass) we heard a distant howling that sounded like monkeys. No one said anything. Our march continued until the howls became more distinct; and then, confused as we were, it dawned on us that the noise was being made by men and not by monkeys at all. Still we did not stop. The sounds were still coming from a long way off. Then, rounding the bend of a stream, we sensed that it was suddenly quite near: it was as if some monster were just ahead of us, peering at us through the trees on our immediate horizon. The howling went on. It was now close at hand, coming from ground level and from the trees—a sharp, disorderly confusion of noise. [23]*

The Samatari had come to a sudden standstill. They were discussing something among themselves. Every time this happened, our alarm quickened: some dark fate was surely being prepared for us. We were all in perfect Indian file, with Enrico and I in the middle, with the Guaycas behind us and three or [203]

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Hygienic Measures

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Toilets for the elimination of excrement are absent. They consider the edge of the radio sufficiently far away for urination. To defecate they go into the forest at some distance from the settlement and away from the paths. An old fallen tree trunk is the preferred site for squatting down, and dry sticks take the place of toilet paper.

No one is capable of intentionally touching dung with the hand or foot. It is considered very dirty, and if one did touch it, his hand or foot must be cleaned and washed immediately.

The dung of dogs and of infants is removed from the patio by pushing it onto leaves with a stick and then throwing these leaves some distance into the forest.

For their nocturnal movements, they put a few leaves on the ground, with which they then make a package; on the following morning they throw them away at some distance from the settlement.

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In El Platanal there is a green beetle which buries hard dung. Half an hour after a movement all evidence disappears.

Sites

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The center of the area in which the Gualka /Waica/ live is the "conuco." In the forest which surrounds the conuco are located their temporary or semipermanent settlements, this depending on the type of terrain, whether it is sandy or clayey.

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Very simple temporary dwellings are used in areas where the fleas or "niguas" are a problem. This type of house consists of a framework of beams for a roof, with leaves placed on top and held down. These same leaves can easily be taken to the site of a new settlement when the Indians move to another, uninfested area.

A more semipermanent type of construction is preferred where the "niguas" do not present a problem and make it impossible to return to the same site. These houses are of /461/ similar construction, but are larger and more durable, and the leaves of the roof are fixed in place. This type of dwelling or shelter takes about five times longer to build in comparison with the temporary type of dwelling.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

men built his own section of the village, but in such a way that the roofs coincided and could be attached by simply extending the thatching. When completed, the village looked like a continuous, oval-shaped lean-to because of the way in which the roofs of the discrete houses were attached. Each house, however, is owned by the family that built it. Shanraiwi, Kqobawi's youngest brother, helped build Kqobawi's house and shares it with him. He also shares Koamashima, Kqobawi's younger wife. Kqobawi's older wife, Bahimi, hangs her hammock adjacent to Kqobawi's most of the time, but when there are visitors and the village is crowded, she ties her hammock under his in order to be able to tend the fire during the night. Ariwari still sleeps with his mother, but will get his own hammock soon: He is nearly four years old. His parents are afraid he will fall into the fire at night and get burned, since he is still a little too young to sleep alone.²¹

Daily activities begin early in a Yanomamö village. One can hear people chatting lazily and children crying long before it is light enough to see. Most people are waked by the cold and build up the fire just before daybreak. They usually go back to sleep, but many of them visit and talk about their plans for the day.

The entrances are all covered with dry brush, so that any movement of people through them is heard all over the village. There is always a procession of people leaving the village at dawn to relieve themselves in the nearby garden, and the noise they make going in and out of the village usually awakens the others.

The village is very smoky at this time of day, since the newly stoked campfires smoulder before they leap into flames. The air is usually very still and chilly, and the ground is damp from the dew. The smoke is pleasant and seems to drive away the coolness.

Clandestine sexual liaisons usually take place at this time of day, having been arranged on the previous evening. The lovers leave the village on the pretext of going to the bathroom and meet at some predetermined location. They return to the village by opposite routes.

This is also the time of day when raiders strike, so people must be cautious when they leave the village at dawn. If there is some reason to suspect raiders, they do not leave the confines of the upright log palisade that surrounds the village. They wait instead until full light and leave the village in armed groups.

By the time it is light enough to see, everybody has started preparing breakfast. This consists largely of roasted green plantains, easily prepared and steaming hot. If the family has any meat, it is taken down and shared, the children getting the best portions. Leftover meat is hung over the fire by a vine to keep the vermin off it and to preserve it.

If any of the men have made plans to hunt that day, they leave the village before it is light. Wild turkeys can be easily taken at this time of day because they roost in conspicuous places. During the dry season the *hanimo* (a kind of grouse) sing before dark and can be readily located. If any were heard the night before, the men leave at dawn to stalk them.

Tobacco chewing starts as soon as people begin stirring. Those who have fresh

²¹A child fell into a fire and burned to death in 1966—the mother had placed her hammock too close to the fire in order to keep warm, and the baby slipped from her arms while she slept. Bahimi's mother also sleeps in Kqobawi's house, but he does not have to avoid her because she is an old woman.